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## Haig's decision on arms for Morocco signals a change

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WASHINGTON—The day before Secretary of State Alexander Haig decided to approve the long-pending tank sale to Morocco, he was visited by an emissary from Morocco's King Hassan.

Although Haig was in his first week in office and busy even for him, he had time to spend about an hour with the royal emissary. One reason is that the CIA sponsored the visit because of concern that Morocco had been unduly neglected during the human rights era at the State Department under President Carter.

As a result of that talk, Haig sent to Congress late last week preliminary notification of the sale of 108 M-60 tanks to Morocco, which the Carter administration had promised. Haig also decided on the early dispatch of 6 OV reconnaissance aircraft, which can be used in the Saharan war against the Algerian-backed Polisario guerrillas.

Congressional sources said they expect no concerted effort to block the sale, which would require a majority vote of both houses. Instead, they do expect to question the U.S. relationship among North African nations, including Morocco and the new-found U.S. friend, Algeria.

One reason there will be no stiff opposition is that Rep. Stephen Solarz (D., N.Y.), an opponent of military aid to Morocco, has dropped the chairmanship of the African subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. A new chairman has yet to be chosen, but none of the candidates seems to share Solarz' point of view about Morocco.

Haig's swift response to Morocco's concerns has significance far beyond the \$180 million tank sale, which by world standards is a droplet in a very large bucket.

It means the U.S. will no longer skew its decisions in foreign policy based on who helped negotiate the Iranian hostage crisis; it means arms sales to Arab states will not meet heavy resistance from the State Department; and it means that old friends will be seen as the best friends.

It also means there will be a less finicky attitude toward arms sales in general from the Reagan administration than from its predecessor. But that was pretty clear even before the Moroccan decision.

Haig's decision on Morocco came just as officials of the Carter administration were calling for improved ties to Algeria as a reward for its cooperation and hard work on behalf of the U.S. hostages in Iran. Andy Young explained in a lengthy newspaper column why friendship with Algeria and deference to its interests would help the U.S. among developing nations.

The tank sale to Morocco was delayed by the Carter administration first on human rights grounds, then later on grounds it would offend Algeria. Former Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher argued until he left office that the sale should be put aside, perhaps permanently, out of deference to Algeria.

All this ignored the fact Algeria has human rights problems of its own. Witness the long incarceration of its former leader Ben Bella. And Algeria pursues a policy in international affairs far at odds with the U.S., as for instance its harboring and support of the Polisario guerrillas.

Algeria also has been one of the price hawks of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries [OPEC], and a supporter of wars of liberation in general. Haig cited "wars of liberation" as one of the three greatest dangers facing U.S. foreign policy, along with Soviet "illegal

activities" abroad and international terrorism.

Morocco, on the other hand, just concluded a prominent role in the Islamic summit during which it redefined Islamic holy war, or jihad, along more moderate lines.

King Hassan, finishing his first three-year term as head of the Jerusalem Committee of the Islamic Confederation, eliminated military means from the definition of jihad as applied to Jerusalem.

Instead of pledging military action to reclaim Jerusalem, the Islamic states pledges political and economic action. Hassan, who has been criticized by other Arabs in the past for what they view as an excessively moderate view on Palestinian matters, won another three-year term as chairman of the Jerusalem committee.

There are plenty of reasons to reestablish good ties with Morocco, just as there are reasons not to walk away from Algeria. During the Iranian crisis, the U.S. was not merely willing to "talk with the devil if that would help," as one official once said. The U.S., in its rush to find a solution, ignored old friends for the sake of new ones. Haig's action on Morocco is a clear break with that policy.